MARVEL
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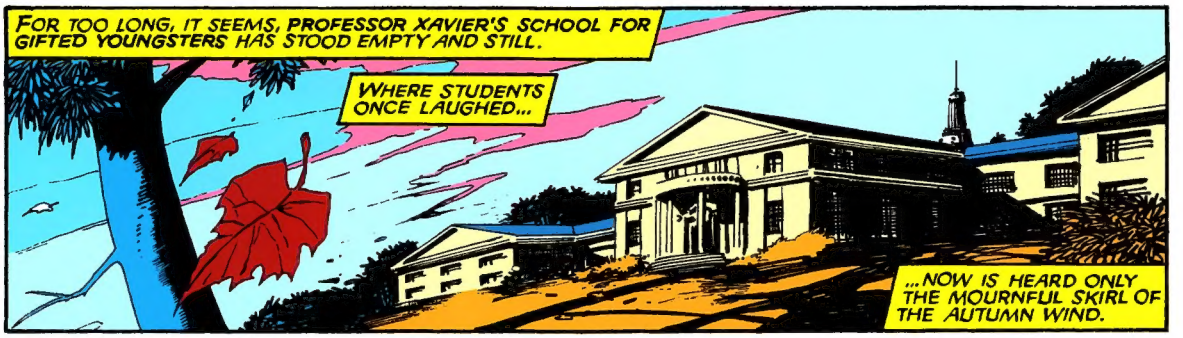
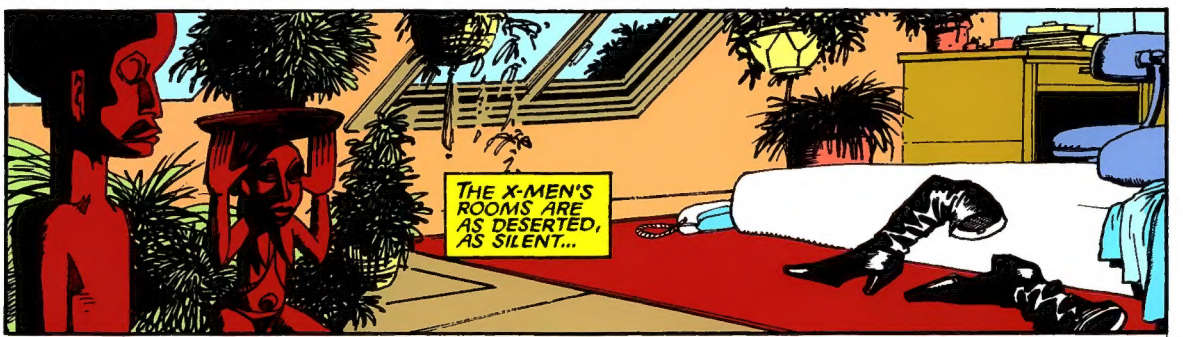
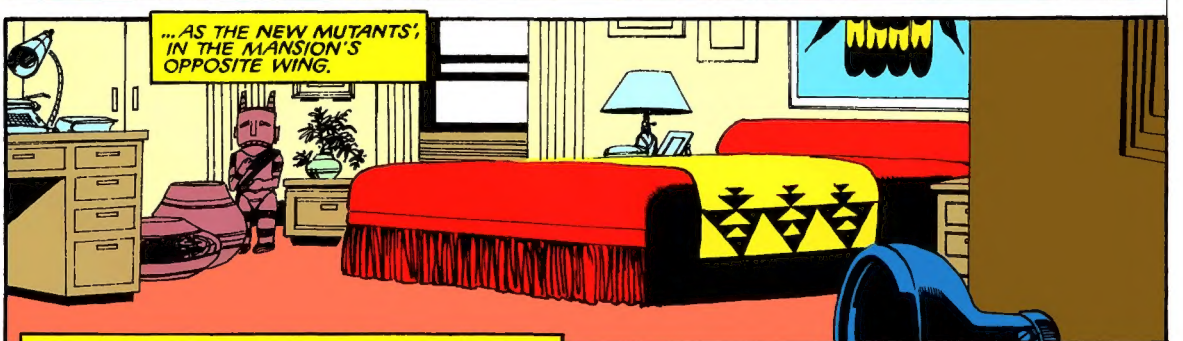
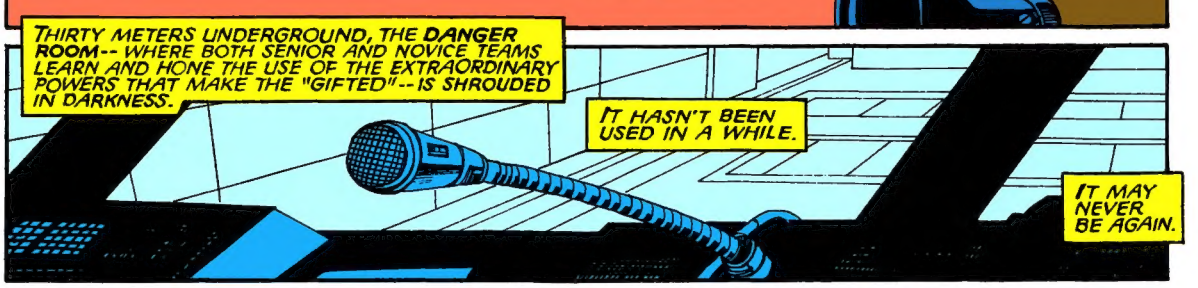
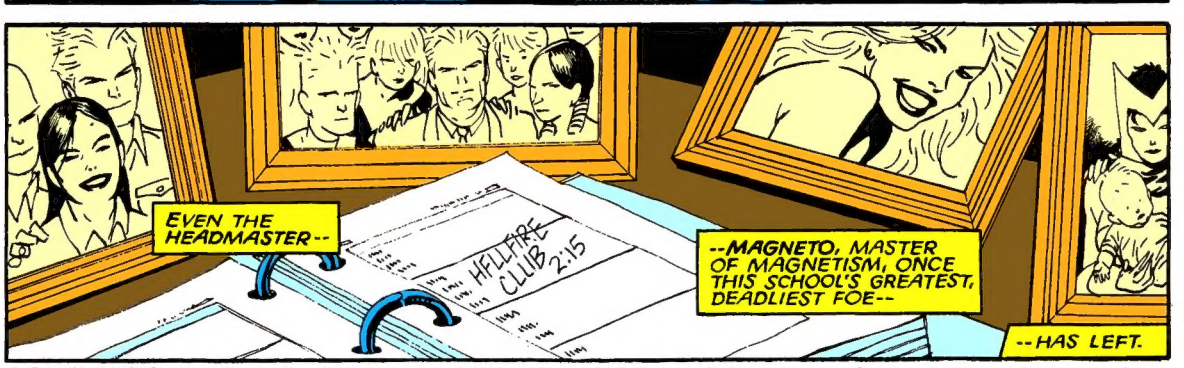
AUTHORITY
THE NEW
MUTANTS
GUEST-STARRING
PROFESSOR X AND
THE STARJAMMERS!


FOR TOO LONG, IT SEEMS, PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS HAS STOOD EMPTY AND STILL.
WHERE STUDENTS ONCE LAUGHED...
...NOW IS HEARD ONLY THE MOURNFUL SKIRL OF THE AUTUMN WIND.






THIRTY METERS UNDERGROUND, THE DANGER ROOM-- WHERE BOTH SENIOR AND NOVICE TEAMS LEARN AND HONE THE USE OF THE EXTRAORDINARY POWERS THAT MAKE THE "GIFTED"--IS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS.
IT HASN'T BEEN USED IN A WHILE.
IT MAY NEVER BE AGAIN.



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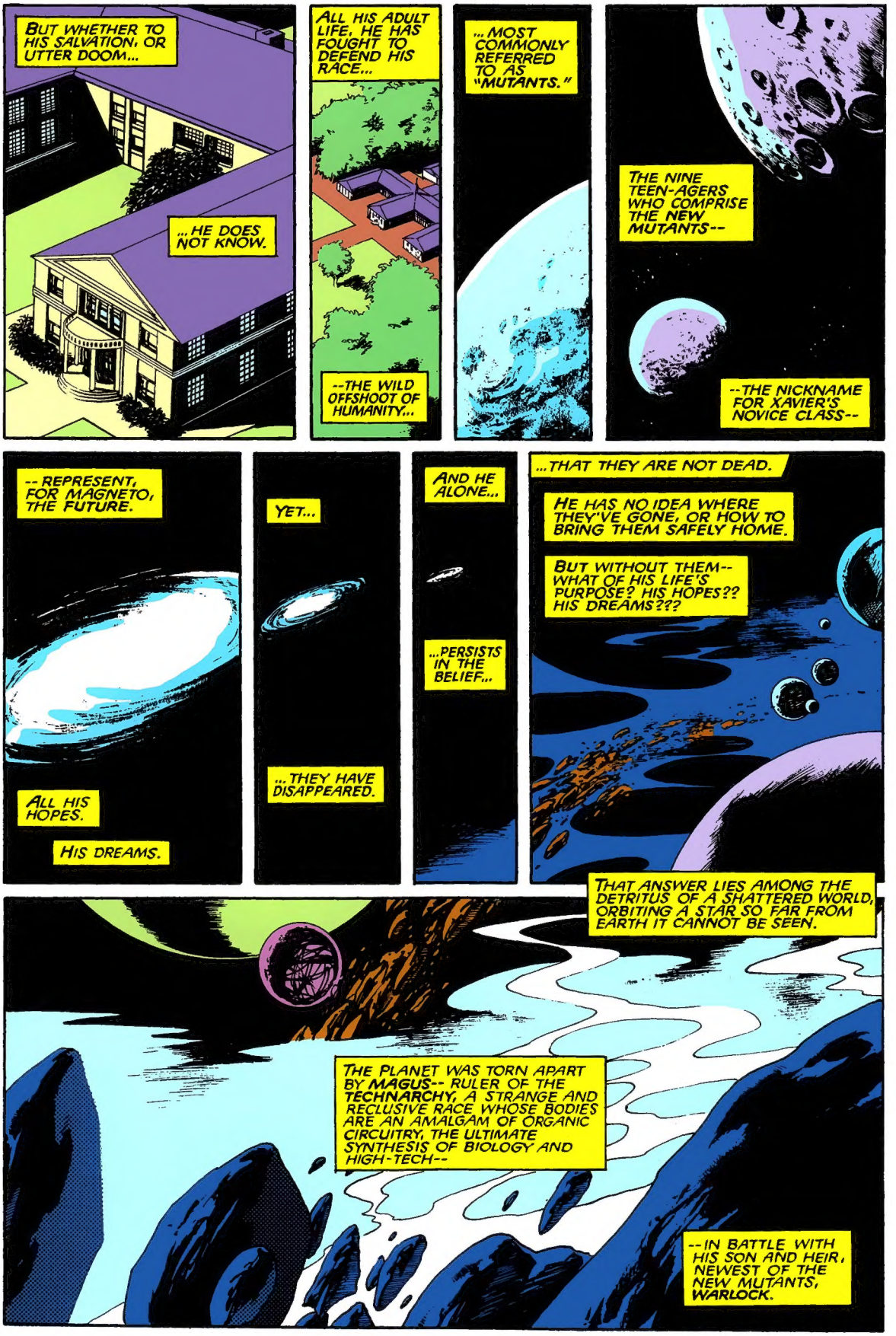
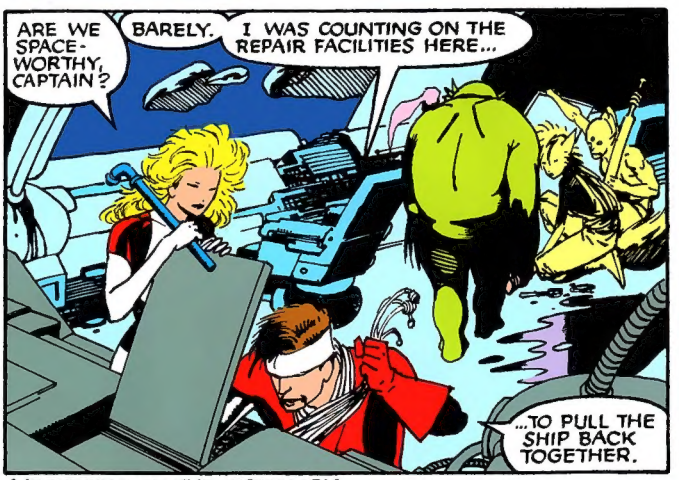
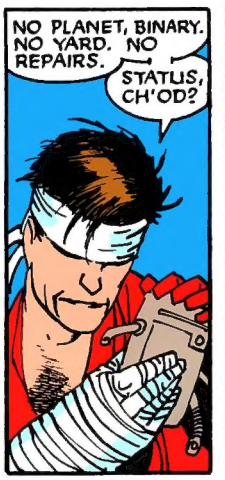
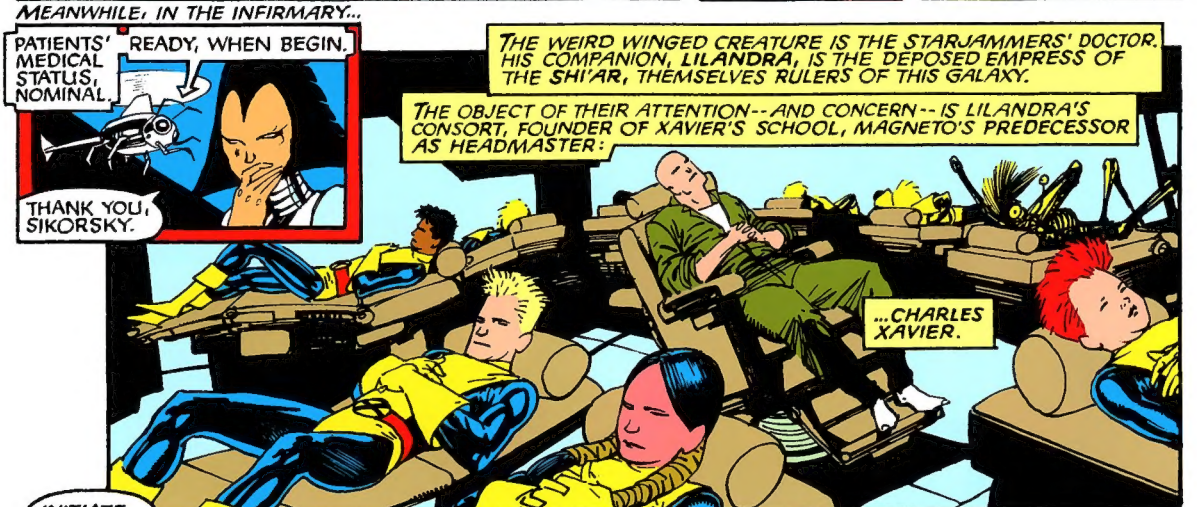

But whether to his salvation, or utter doom...
...he does not know.
All his adult life, he has fought to defend his race...
--the wild offshoot of humanity...
...most commonly referred to as "mutants."
The nine teen-agers who comprise the new mutants--
--the nickname for Xavier's novice class--
-- represent, for Magneto, the future.
All his hopes.
His dreams.
Yet...
...they have disappeared.
And he alone...
...persists in the belief...
...that they are not dead.
He has no idea where they've gone, or how to bring them safely home.
But without them-- what of his life's purpose? his hopes?? his dreams???
That answer lies among the detritus of a shattered world, orbiting a star so far from Earth it cannot be seen.
The planet was torn apart by **Magus**-- ruler of the **Technarchy**, a strange and reclusive race whose bodies are an amalgam of organic circuitry, the ultimate synthesis of biology and high-tech--
--in battle with his son and heir, newest of the new mutants, Warlock.

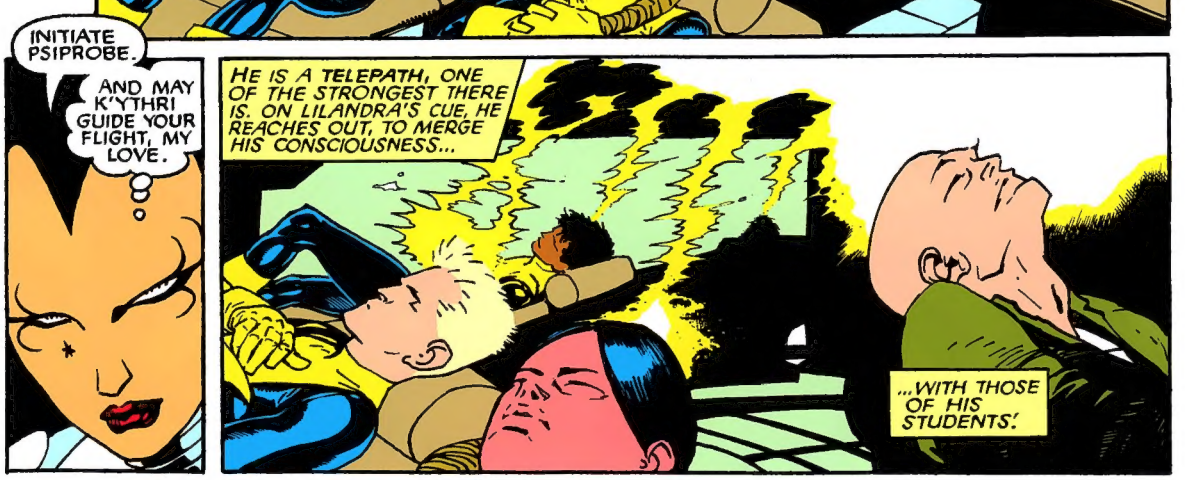
WARLOCK WON--
--THE THREAT POSED BY HIS FATHER ENDED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE--
-- BUT NOT WITHOUT SOME CONSIDERABLE COST...
...TO THIS WORLD, AND THOSE WHO LIVED ON IT. AND, AS WELL, TO THE MUTANTS' FRIENDS, THE STARJAMMERS.





MEANWHILE, IN THE INFIRMARY...


PATIENTS' MEDICAL STATUS, NOMINAL.
READY, WHEN BEGIN.
THANK YOU, SIKORSKY.
THE WEIRD WINGED CREATURE IS THE STARJAMMERS' DOCTOR. HIS COMPANION, LILANDRA, IS THE DEPOSED EMPRESS OF THE SHI'AR, THEMSELVES RULERS OF THIS GALAXY.
THE OBJECT OF THEIR ATTENTION--AND CONCERN--IS LILANDRA'S CONSORT, FOUNDER OF XAVIER'S SCHOOL, MAGNETO'S PREDECESSOR AS HEADMASTER:
...CHARLES XAVIER.


INITIATE PSIPROBE.
AND MAY K'YTHRI GUIDE YOUR FLIGHT, MY LOVE.
HE IS A TELEPATH, ONE OF THE STRONGEST THERE IS. ON LILANDRA'S CUE, HE REACHES OUT, TO MERGE HIS CONSCIOUSNESS...
...WITH THOSE OF HIS STUDENTS!

STAN LEE PRESENTS

Teachers' Choice

STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS

A MOMENT LATER, HE IS DEEP WITHIN THEIR MEMORIES...

HE RETURNS WITH THEM TO THE RECENT PAST, TO THE SPRAWLING, SECRET TUNNEL COMPLEX A MILE BENEATH MANHATTAN THAT IS THE MORLOCKS' TUNNELS.

THEY ARE MUTANTS, TOO, WHO'D CHOSEN TO LIVE AS OUTCASTS, AS FAR FROM MAINSTREAM HUMANITY AS POSSIBLE.

THEY'VE BEEN. MASSACRED.

HIS STUDENTS' MINDS ARE CRAMMED WITH SCATTERSHOT, VILE, VIOLENT IMAGES-- AIR THICK, THEY REMEMBER, WITH THE CHOKING STENCH OF DEATH, AN OCCASIONAL BODY RECOGNIZABLE AS FRIEND OR ACQUAINTANCE, MOST ARE STRANGERS, OLD MAN'S HAND CLASPED TIGHT AROUND HIS BLOODY KEEPSAKE, A BABY'S RATTLE, THE TERRIBLE SILENCE BROKEN BY SOBS, A KEENING WAIL OF DESPAIR, A MUTTERED-RANTING-UNCONSCIOUS STREAM OF PROFANITY.

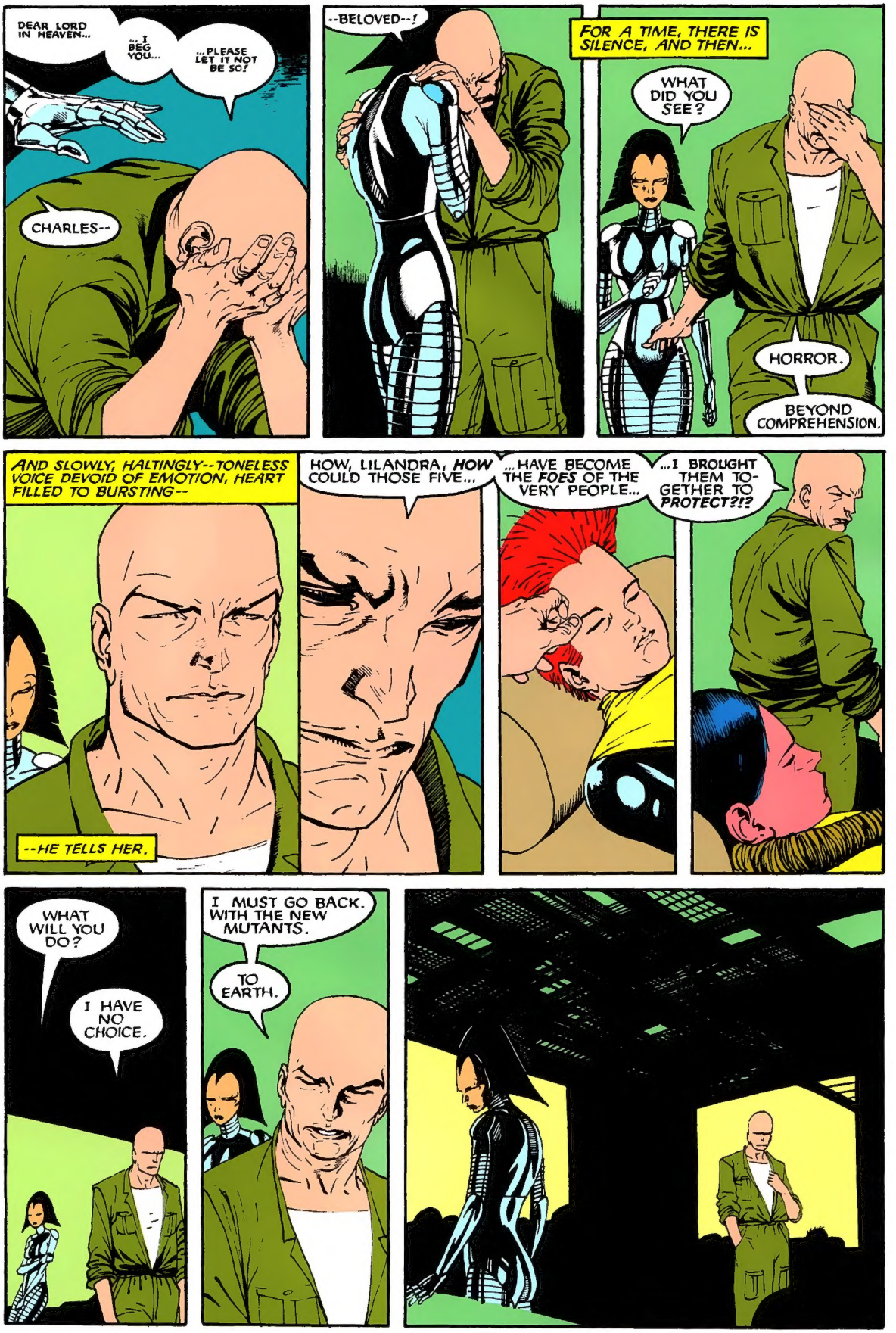
THE NEW MUTANTS CAN'T BELIEVE THEIR EYES.

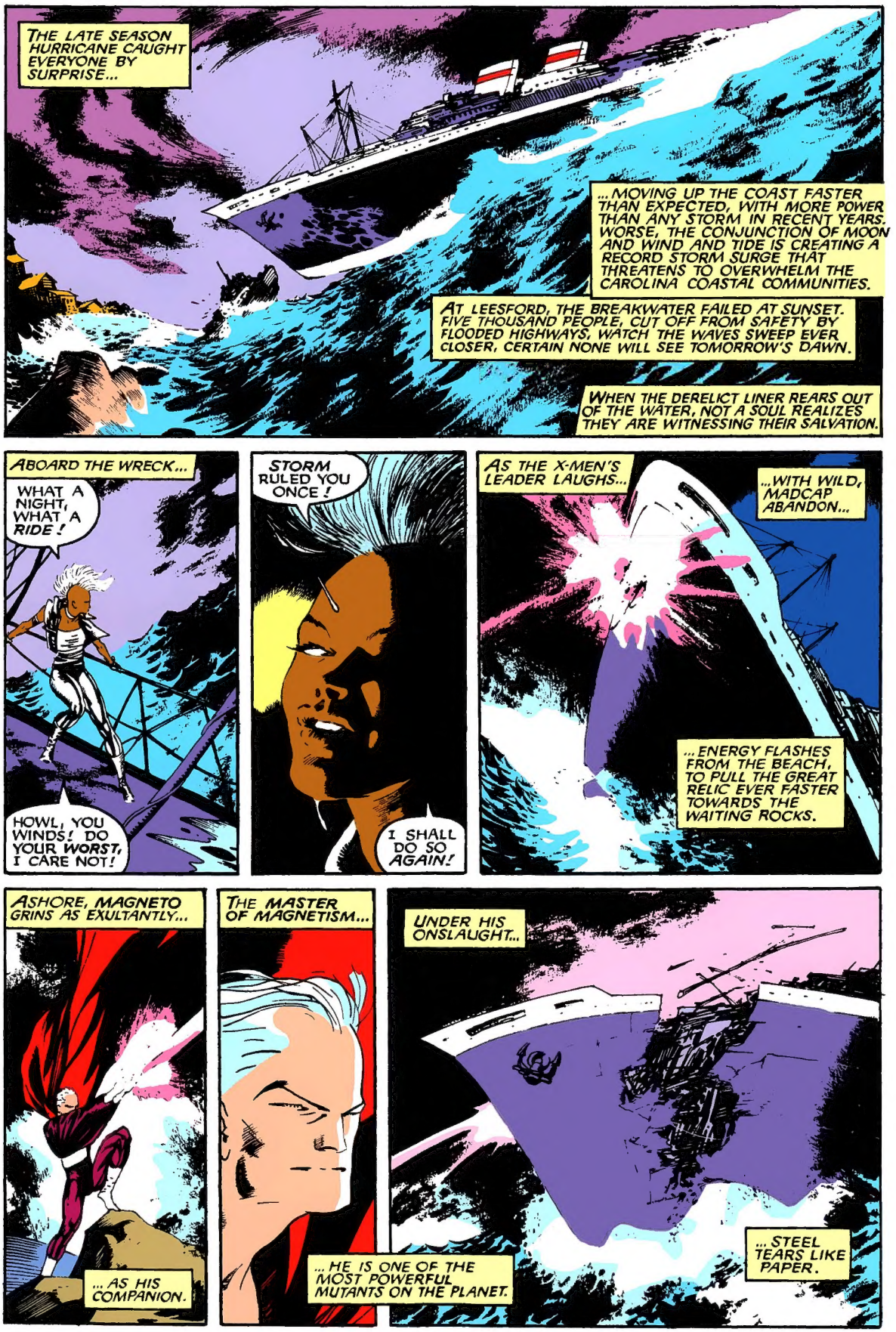
THEY DON'T WANT TO.

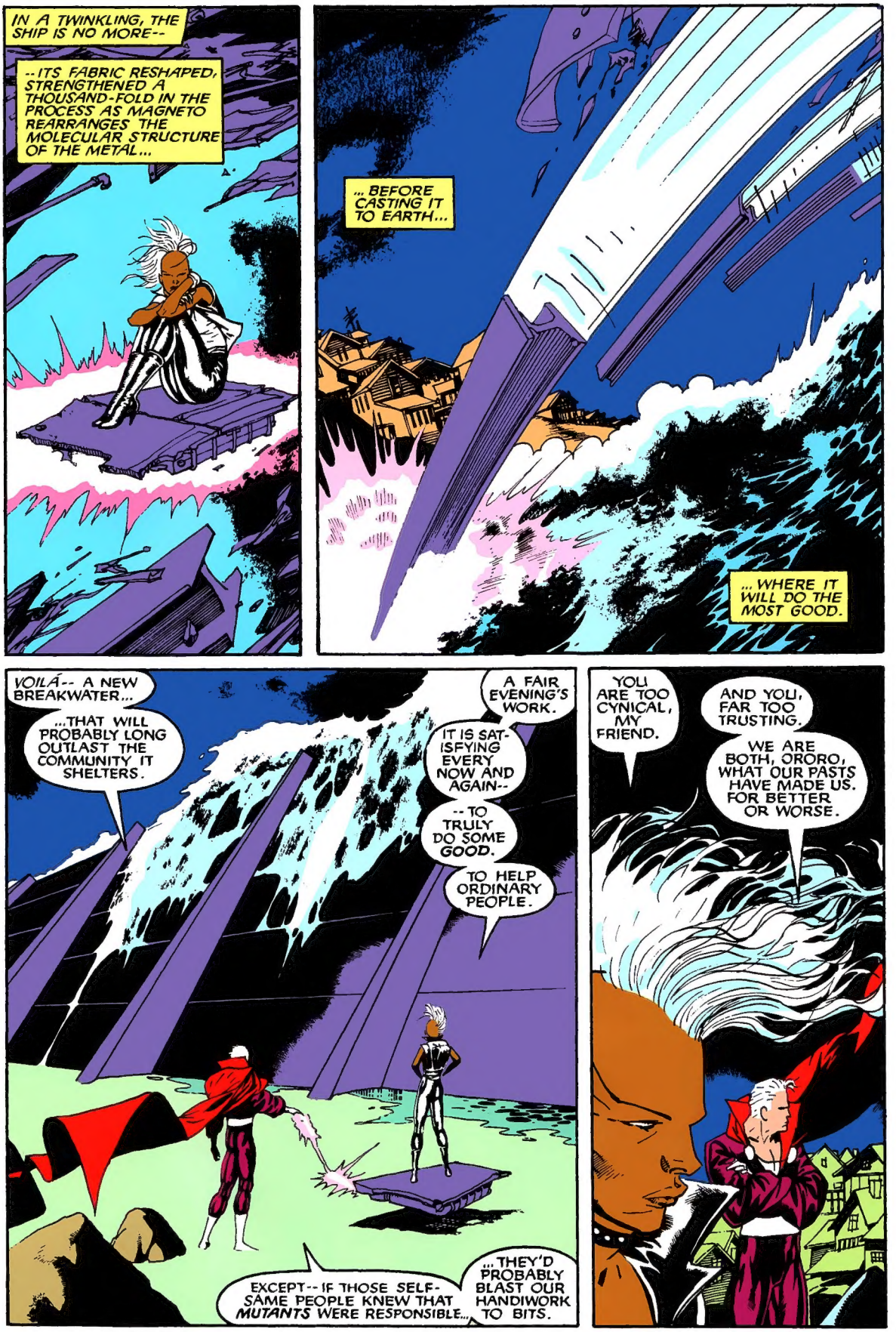
THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE NEW MUTANTS BROUGHT TO YOU BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND KEVIN NOWLAN. IT'S OFF-BEAT, IT'S DIFFERENT, AND WE KNOW YOU'RE GONNA LOVE IT!

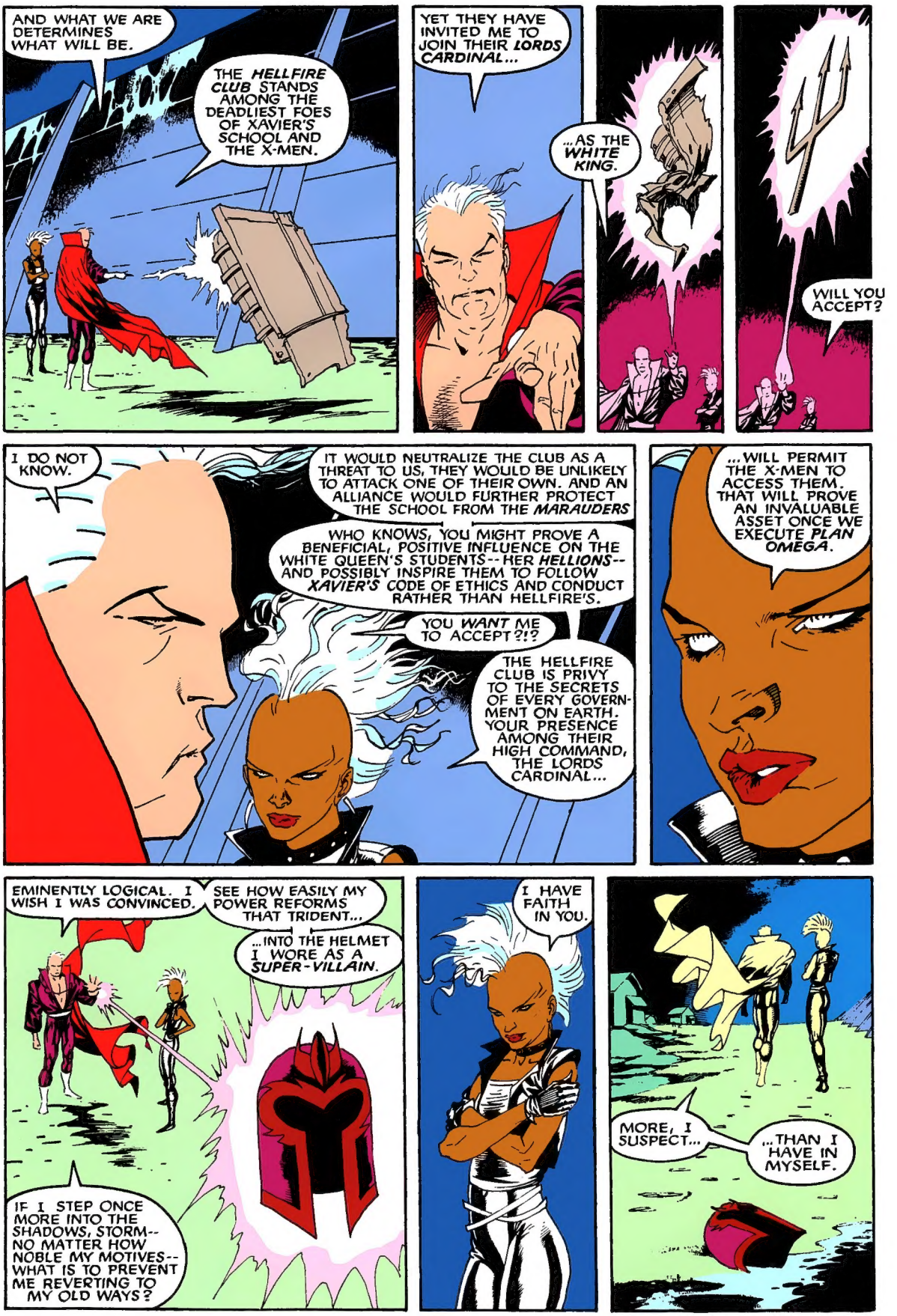
TOM ORZECHOWSKI
LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER
COLORIST
ANN NOCENTI
EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF
CHRIS CLAREMONT & BOB McLEOD CREATORS

NEITHER DOES THEIR TEACHER.
THINGS GET WORSE.
MEMORIES BACKTRACK FARTHER...
...TO REVEAL THE X-MEN RETURNING FROM THE MORLOCK TUNNELS WITH THE MASSACRE'S PITIFULLY FEW SURVIVORS. NOT EVEN THE X-MEN ESCAPED UNSCATHED.
HALF THEIR NUMBER MAY NOT RECOVER.
THE ASSASSINS ARE MUTANTS AS WELL, A BAND CALLED THE MARAUDERS.
NO!
FURTHER STILL.
WORSE YET.
MORE THAN HE CAN BEAR.
OUR GUEST TONIGHT IS CAMERON HODGE...
HE WANTS TO STOP.
...PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR OF X-FACTOR...
AS YOU KNOW, ROGER, THE WORLD IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED...
...ABOUT THE GROWING NUMBERS AND POWER OF MUTANTKIND.
TO RUN AWAY.
X-FACTOR IS A RESPONSE TO THAT POTENTIAL THREAT.
WHEN INFORMED OF A MUTANT PRESENCE, OUR TRAINED OPERATIVES-- ON THE SCREEN BEHIND ME--
-- WILL DEAL WITH IT. SPEEDILY. EFFECTIVELY.
TO DENY WHAT HE SEES.
THIS IS MADNESS, IT CANNOT BE TRUE!
THAT "X-FACTOR"-- THEY ARE MY FIRST STUDENTS, THE ORIGINAL X-MEN!
NO!


DEAR LORD IN HEAVEN...
...I BEG YOU...
...PLEASE LET IT NOT BE SO!
CHARLES--
--BELOVED--!
FOR A TIME, THERE IS SILENCE, AND THEN...
WHAT DID YOU SEE?
HORROR.
BEYOND COMPREHENSION.
AND SLOWLY, HALTINGLY--TONELESS VOICE DEVOID OF EMOTION, HEART FILLED TO BURSTING--
--HE TELLS HER.
HOW, LILANDRA, HOW COULD THOSE FIVE...
...HAVE BECOME THE FOES OF THE VERY PEOPLE...
...I BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER TO PROTECT?!?
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
I HAVE NO CHOICE.
I MUST GO BACK. WITH THE NEW MUTANTS.
TO EARTH.


THE LATE SEASON HURRICANE CAUGHT EVERYONE BY SURPRISE...
...MOVING UP THE COAST FASTER THAN EXPECTED, WITH MORE POWER THAN ANY STORM IN RECENT YEARS. WORSE, THE CONJUNCTION OF MOON AND WIND AND TIDE IS CREATING A RECORD STORM SURGE THAT THREATENS TO OVERWHELM THE CAROLINA COASTAL COMMUNITIES.
AT LEESFORD, THE BREAKWATER FAILED AT SUNSET. FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE, CUT OFF FROM SAFETY BY FLOODED HIGHWAYS, WATCH THE WAVES SWEEP EVER CLOSER, CERTAIN NONE WILL SEE TOMORROW'S DAWN.
WHEN THE DERELICT LINER REARS OUT OF THE WATER, NOT A SOUL REALIZES THEY ARE WITNESSING THEIR SALVATION.
ABOARD THE WRECK...
WHAT A NIGHT, WHAT A RIDE!
HOWL, YOU WINDS! DO YOUR WORST, I CARE NOT!
STORM RULED YOU ONCE!
I SHALL DO SO AGAIN!
AS THE X-MEN'S LEADER LAUGHS...
...WITH WILD, MADCAP ABANDON...
...ENERGY FLASHES FROM THE BEACH, TO PULL THE GREAT RELIC EVER FASTER TOWARDS THE WAITING ROCKS.
ASHORE, MAGNETO GRINS AS EXULTANTLY...
...AS HIS COMPANION.
THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM...
...HE IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MUTANTS ON THE PLANET.
UNDER HIS ONSLAUGHT...
...STEEL TEARS LIKE PAPER.

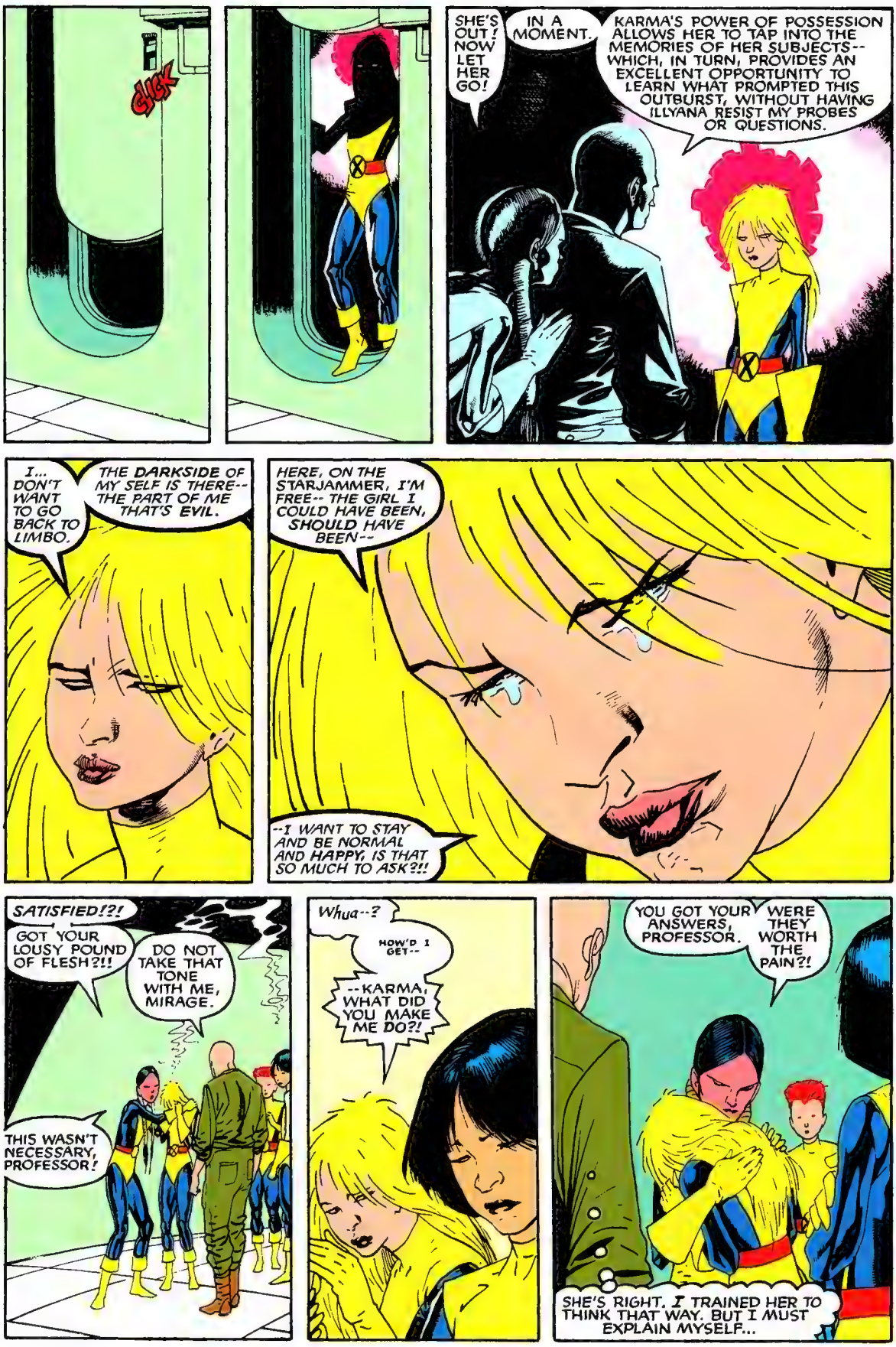

IN A TWINKLING, THE SHIP IS NO MORE--
--ITS FABRIC RESHAPED, STRENGTHENED A THOUSAND-FOLD IN THE PROCESS AS MAGNETO REARRANGES THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF THE METAL...
... BEFORE CASTING IT TO EARTH...
... WHERE IT WILL DO THE MOST GOOD.
VOILÁ-- A NEW BREAKWATER...
...THAT WILL PROBABLY LONG OUTLAST THE COMMUNITY IT SHELTERS.
A FAIR EVENING'S WORK.
IT IS SATISFYING EVERY NOW AND AGAIN--
--TO TRULY DO SOME GOOD.
TO HELP ORDINARY PEOPLE.
EXCEPT-- IF THOSE SELF-SAME PEOPLE KNEW THAT MUTANTS WERE RESPONSIBLE...
...THEY'D PROBABLY BLAST OUR HANDIWORK TO BITS.
YOU ARE TOO CYNICAL, MY FRIEND.
AND YOU, FAR TOO TRUSTING.
WE ARE BOTH, ORORO, WHAT OUR PASTS HAVE MADE US. FOR BETTER OR WORSE.


AND WHAT WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WILL BE.
THE HELLFIRE CLUB STANDS AMONG THE DEADLIEST FOES OF XAVIER'S SCHOOL AND THE X-MEN.
YET THEY HAVE INVITED ME TO JOIN THEIR LORDS CARDINAL...
...AS THE WHITE KING.
WILL YOU ACCEPT?
I DO NOT KNOW.
IT WOULD NEUTRALIZE THE CLUB AS A THREAT TO US, THEY WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO ATTACK ONE OF THEIR OWN. AND AN ALLIANCE WOULD FURTHER PROTECT THE SCHOOL FROM THE MARAUDERS
WHO KNOWS, YOU MIGHT PROVE A BENEFICIAL, POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON THE WHITE QUEEN'S STUDENTS--HER HELLIONS--AND POSSIBLY INSPIRE THEM TO FOLLOW XAVIER'S CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT RATHER THAN HELLFIRE'S.
YOU WANT ME TO ACCEPT?!?
THE HELLFIRE CLUB IS PRIVY TO THE SECRETS OF EVERY GOVERNMENT ON EARTH. YOUR PRESENCE AMONG THEIR HIGH COMMAND, THE LORDS CARDINAL...
...WILL PERMIT THE X-MEN TO ACCESS THEM. THAT WILL PROVE AN INVALUABLE ASSET ONCE WE EXECUTE PLAN OMEGA.
EMINENTLY LOGICAL. I WISH I WAS CONVINCED.
SEE HOW EASILY MY POWER REFORMS THAT TRIDENT...
...INTO THE HELMET I WORE AS A SUPER-VILLAIN.
IF I STEP ONCE MORE INTO THE SHADOWS, STORM--NO MATTER HOW NOBLE MY MOTIVES--WHAT IS TO PREVENT ME REVERTING TO MY OLD WAYS?
I HAVE FAITH IN YOU.
MORE, I SUSPECT...
...THAN I HAVE IN MYSELF.

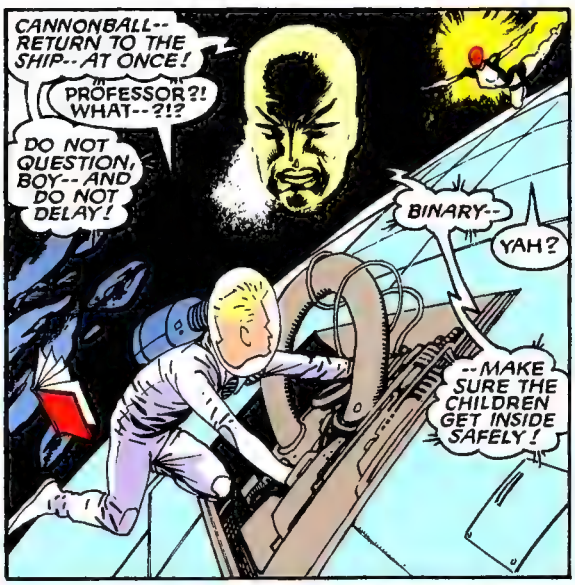
DEEP SPACE...
...THE STARJAMMER...
WOWIE-ZOWIE-- THIS BABY IS HUGE!
AND A ROYAL MESS.
BUT THE STARJAMMERS RISKED THEIR LIVES TO RESCUE US. ONLY FAIR WE DO OUR BEST TO HELP THEM OUT IN RETURN.
WARLOCK, HAVE WE PROCESSED ENOUGH RAW MATERIAL TO PATCH THAT HOLE?
AFFIRMATIVE, SELFSOULFRIEND-PARTNERBOSS-DOUG.
GANGWAY, Y'ALL! AH GOTTA SHUNT THIS MODULE INTO THE CARGO BAY!
WHAT A TRIP!
AH'M IN SPACE, TALKIN' AN' WORKIN' WITH ALIENS!
IT'S LIKE THE BEST SCIENCE-FICTION BOOKS AH EVER READ COME TO LIFE!
MY TASK IS TO SEAL THIS BREACH.
I MUST TRY THE ENERGY REMAINING IN THIS PIECE OF THE SHATTERED PLANET, AND UNLEASH IT AS A LAVA BLAST.
I MUST TAKE GREAT CARE--
--EXERT MAXIMUM CONTROL--
--SO AS NOT TO DAMAGE MY PROTECTIVE GARMENT IN THE PROCESS.
PROFESSOR XAVIER, IF YOU CAN HEAR MY THOUGHTS...
...MAGMA'S WORK IS DONE...
...AND DONE WELL.

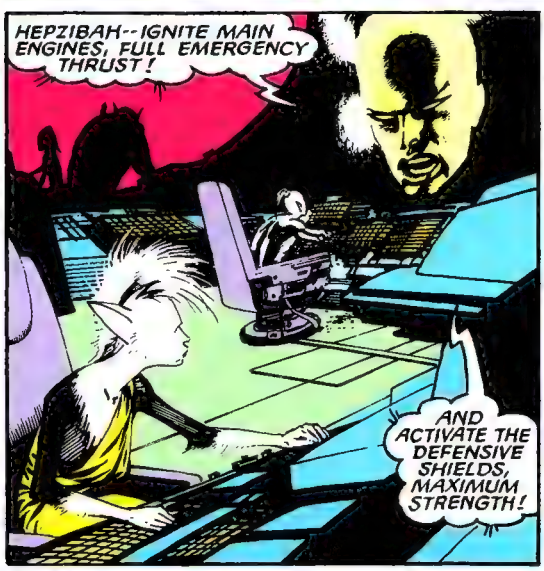
THE BRIDGE...
REPAIRS PROCEED FASTER THAN EXPECTED. THE SOONER WE FINISH, THE SOONER CHARLES WILL DEPART.
IF HE GOES, I KNOW I WILL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN.
WOULDN'T BE IN THIS MADPLACE IF STAYED WE HAD WITH TRUE CALLING.
GIVE IT A REST, HEPZIBAH.
DEFEND FEATHERHEAD, RAZA, WHETHER WRONG OR RIGHT-- BECAUSE YOU AND SHE BLOOD-KIN!
PRIVATEERS WE ARE-- FREEBOOTERS-- NOT REBELS...
... IN A HOPELESS CAUSE.
WOULD YOU RATHER SEE MY SISTER ON THE THRONE? REMEMBER, HEPZIBAH, SHE IS NOT CALLED "DEATHBIRD" FOR NOTHING!
COULDN'T CARE LESS, I. IMPERIUM HAS RULER IT DESERVES.
IF LILANDRA WANTS THRONE, ONLY PROVES SHE JUST AS CRAZED AS SISTER.
POW
ROTLUCK BEEN OURS FULL MEASURE SINCE YOU JOINED
I AM DONE WITH YOUR SNIPING, WOMAN, AND YOUR HATE! I HAD NO PART IN THE DESTRUCTION OF YOUR WORLD!
PAX, THE PAIR OF YOU!
HATE, IF YOU MUST, FOR WHAT I AM--
--NOT FOR WHAT YOU THINK I REPRESENT.
PROFESSOR X-- !
INTERCOM HOLOGRAM PROJECTION-- WOLFSBANE!
TROUBLE, SIR-- COME QUICKLY!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, RAHNE?!
CALM YOURSELF, CHILD. YOUR THOUGHTS ARE TOO WILD AND CHAOTIC FOR ME TO READ!
Oh, PROFESSOR-- THANK HEAVEN--
-- IT'S ILLYANA-- I FEAR IT'S MY FAULT, ONLY I DINNA KNOW WHAT IT WAS I DID--
--NATTERING, I WAS, LIKE A WEE SILLY, ABOUT HOW GOOD IT'LL BE TO RETURN HOME, EVEN THOUGH WE'LL HAVE TO TRAVEL THROUGH ILLYANA'S REALM OF LIMBO TO GET THERE...
...WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, ILLYANA GOT TERRIBLY UPSET AN' LOCKED HERSELF IN HER ROOM!
SHE WON'T OPEN THE DOOR-- OR EVEN ANSWER ME-- NO MATTER HOW HARD I CALL!
LET ME TRY, THEN.
ILLYANA...
... IT'S PROFESSOR XAVIER...
GO AWAY!
GET OUT OF MY HEAD AND LEAVE ME ALONE--
--OR I'LL TELEPORT MYSELF TO LIMBO, I MEAN IT...
...AND LEAVE YOU ALL BEHIND! FOREVER!!
I'VE NEVER HEARD HER PANICKED. OR HYSTERICAL.
THIS IS BAD, SIR. I THINK SHE'S SERIOUS.
WE CANNOT LET HER STRAND US, MES AMIS.
AND WE WILL NOT.
KARMA, I'LL GIVE YOU ENTRY TO ILLYANA'S MIND, SO YOU CAN "POSSESS" HER AND MAKE HER UNLOCK THE DOOR.
PROFESSOR, NO! THERE HAS TO BE A BETTER WAY--!
WITH RESPECT, MIRAGE, WHILE YOU ARE CO-LEADER OF THE NEW MUTANTS, I AM YOUR TEACHER.
I BELIEVE I KNOW BEST.
KARMA, IF YOU PLEASE--?
I... HAVE HER, M'SIEU.


CLICK
SHE'S OUT! NOW LET HER GO!
IN A MOMENT.
KARMA'S POWER OF POSSESSION ALLOWS HER TO TAP INTO THE MEMORIES OF HER SUBJECTS-- WHICH, IN TURN, PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN WHAT PROMPTED THIS OUTBURST, WITHOUT HAVING ILLYANA RESIST MY PROBES OR QUESTIONS.
I... DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO LIMBO.
THE DARKSIDE OF MY SELF IS THERE-- THE PART OF ME THAT'S EVIL.
HERE, ON THE STARJAMMER, I'M FREE-- THE GIRL I COULD HAVE BEEN, SHOULD HAVE BEEN--
--I WANT TO STAY AND BE NORMAL AND HAPPY, IS THAT SO MUCH TO ASK?!!
SATISFIED!?!
GOT YOUR LOUSY POUND OF FLESH?!!
DO NOT TAKE THAT TONE WITH ME, MIRAGE.
THIS WASN'T NECESSARY, PROFESSOR!
Whua--?
HOW'D I GET--
--KARMA, WHAT DID YOU MAKE ME DO?!
YOU GOT YOUR ANSWERS, PROFESSOR.
WERE THEY WORTH THE PAIN?!
SHE'S RIGHT. I TRAINED HER TO THINK THAT WAY. BUT I MUST EXPLAIN MYSELF...

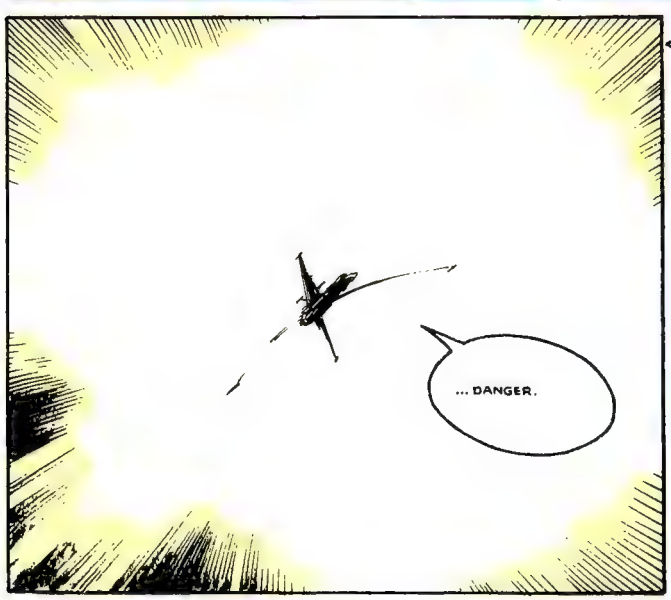
WOULD YOU RATHER BE TRAPPED HERE, MIRAGE--?
--POSSIBLY FOR THE REST OF--
--BY THE ETERNAL!?!


CANNONBALL--RETURN TO THE SHIP--AT ONCE!
PROFESSOR?! WHAT--?!?
DO NOT QUESTION, BOY--AND DO NOT DELAY!
BINARY--
YAH?
--MAKE SURE THE CHILDREN GET INSIDE SAFELY!

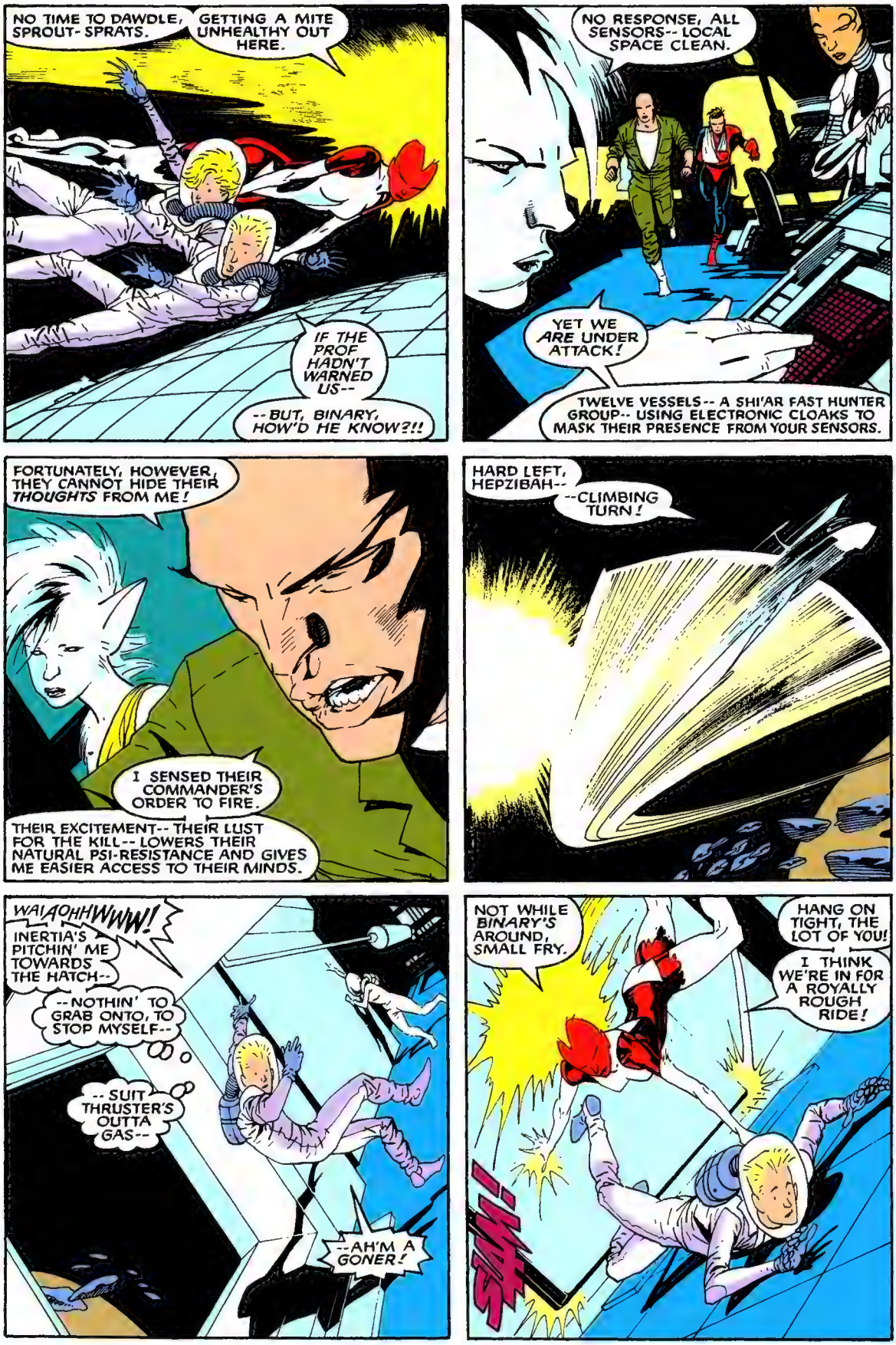

HEPZIBAH--IGNITE MAIN ENGINES, FULL EMERGENCY THRUST!
AND ACTIVATE THE DEFENSIVE SHIELDS, MAXIMUM STRENGTH!

DONE, CHARLEY-BOY.

WE MOVING.
QUERY, WHY?
SCAN-SCOPES ALL CLEAN. NO CONTACTS, NO...


... DANGER.

MY EYES!
HELMET COMPENSATORS BARELY HANDLING THE ACTINIC LOAD.
HOPE MY SUIT DOES BETTER AGAINST THE RADIATION--
--'CAUSE THAT WAS A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION!

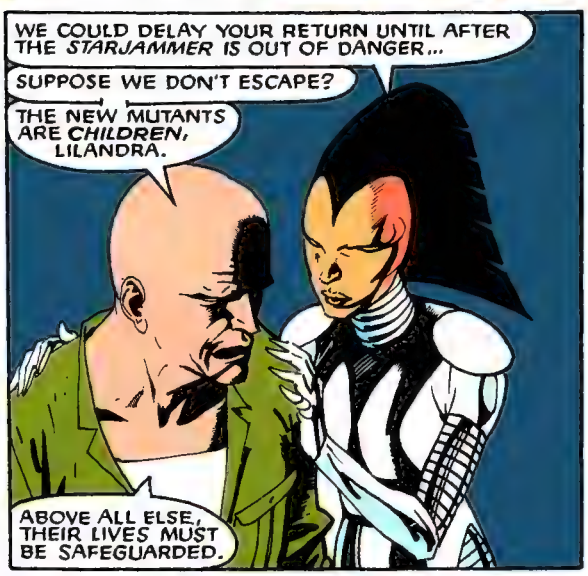

NO TIME TO DAWDLE, SPROUT- SPRATS.
GETTING A MITE UNHEALTHY OUT HERE.
IF THE PROF HADN'T WARNED US--
--BUT, BINARY, HOW'D HE KNOW?!!
NO RESPONSE, ALL SENSORS-- LOCAL SPACE CLEAN.
YET WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!
TWELVE VESSELS-- A SHI'AR FAST HUNTER GROUP-- USING ELECTRONIC CLOAKS TO MASK THEIR PRESENCE FROM YOUR SENSORS.
FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THEY CANNOT HIDE THEIR THOUGHTS FROM ME!
I SENSED THEIR COMMANDER'S ORDER TO FIRE.
THEIR EXCITEMENT-- THEIR LUST FOR THE KILL-- LOWERS THEIR NATURAL PSI-RESISTANCE AND GIVES ME EASIER ACCESS TO THEIR MINDS.
HARD LEFT, HEPZIBAH--
--CLIMBING TURN!
WAIAOHHWWW!
INERTIA'S PITCHIN' ME TOWARDS THE HATCH--
--NOTHIN' TO GRAB ONTO, TO STOP MYSELF--
-- SUIT THRUSTER'S OUTTA GAS--
--AH'M A GONER!
NOT WHILE BINARY'S AROUND, SMALL FRY.
HANG ON TIGHT, THE LOT OF YOU!
I THINK WE'RE IN FOR A ROYALLY ROUGH RIDE!
WHAM!

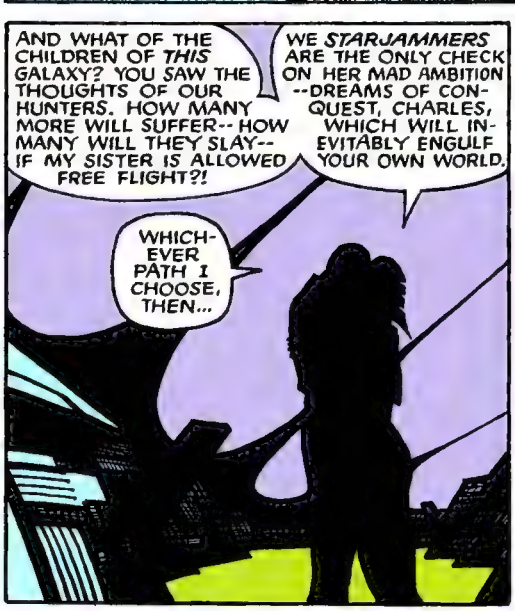
HOYA! BE NICE...
... IF WE COULD SHOOT BACK!
WITH WHAT, CH'OD?!
OUR GUNS WERE WRECKED IN THE LAST FIGHT!
THEY ARE ATTEMPTING AN ENGLOBEMENT MANEUVER.
THEY SUCCEED, WE SOON BE SPIKED TO COMPONENT ATOMS.
GO DEAD IN SPACE-- STOP US RIGHT WHERE WE ARE!
DONE.
REVERSE COURSE, HEPZIBAH-- THEN DROP AWAY, 90° SHIFT DOWN!
DONE AGAIN, CHARLEY-BOY--
--SOME WILD RIDE, HEY, LOVE IT!
YOU'RE CUTTING OUR COURSE AWFULLY CLOSE TO THOSE BLAST FIELDS, XAVIER.
INTENTIONALLY, CORSAIR. IN HOPES THAT THE IONIZATION FIELDS THROWN OUT BY THE EXPLOSIONS WILL SCRAMBLE OUR FOES' SENSORS.
"REVERSE COURSE, HEPZIBAH-- BACK THE WAY WE CAME!"
MON DIEU-- THE SHIP HAS GONE MAD!
THIS ISN'T ANY SPACESHIP, SHAN, IT'S A BUCKING BRONO!
LUCKY WE'RE WEIGHTLESS. NO MATTER HOW VIOLENTLY THE STAR-JAMMER MOVES, THAT-- PLUS THIS ROOM'S SHEER SIZE-- GIVES US TIME TO REACT AND KEEP OURSELVES FROM BEING HURT, CRASHING INTO WALLS, OR EACH OTHER.
HECK, IT'S ALMOST FUN!

I'M MENTALLY PROJECTING A TACTICAL OVERVIEW OF OUR SITUATION FOR YOU ALL TO SEE.
THEY'RE VERY GOOD, THAT GANG.
WE'RE STAYING AHEAD OF THEIR GAME-- BUT ONLY BARELY...
...AND ALL THANKS TO YOU, XAVIER.
YOU'RE OUR EDGE--OUR ACE IN THE HOLE. WITHOUT YOU, WE'RE DONE.

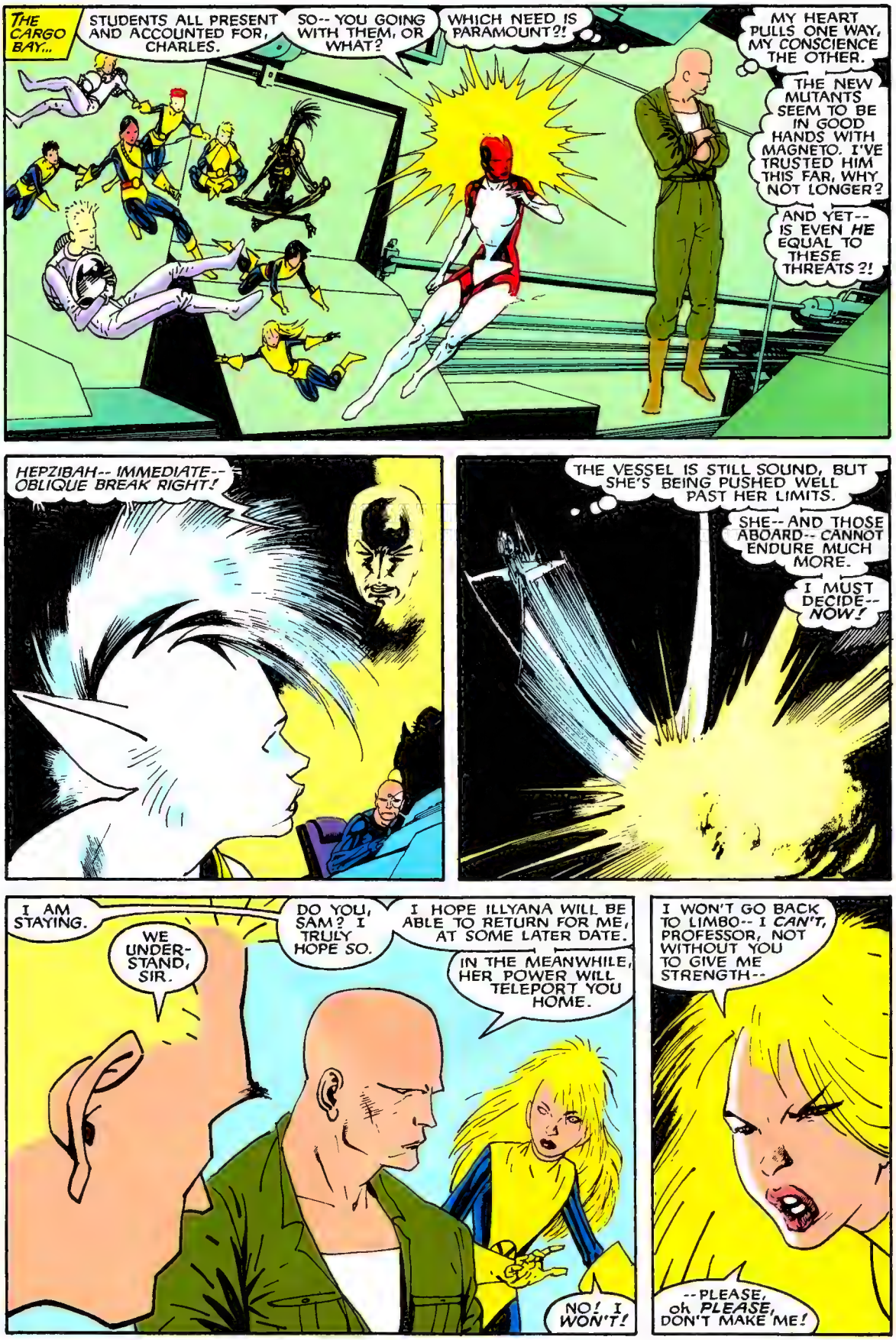
EVEN WITH YOU, NOTHING'S CERTAIN. BUT AT LEAST WE HAVE A CHANCE.
CORSAIR, YOU SAW-- YOU HEARD-- WHAT'S OCCURRING BACK ON EARTH. I'M NEEDED THERE, DESPERATELY!

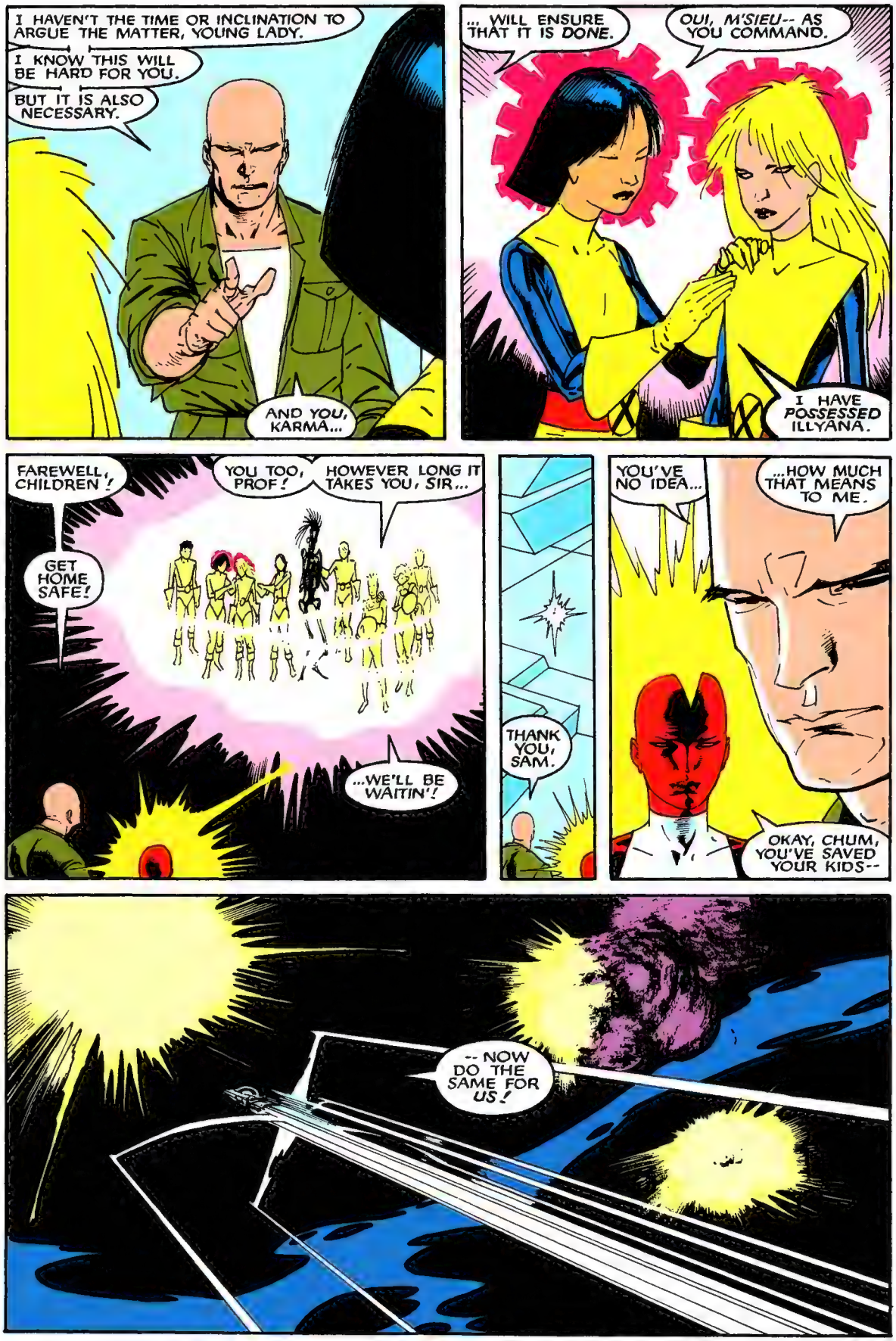
AND YET...
...I OWE THE STARJAMMERS MY LIFE--!
BLAST! WE WERE HIT! CAN'T LET MY CONCENTRATION LAPSE FOR A SECOND!

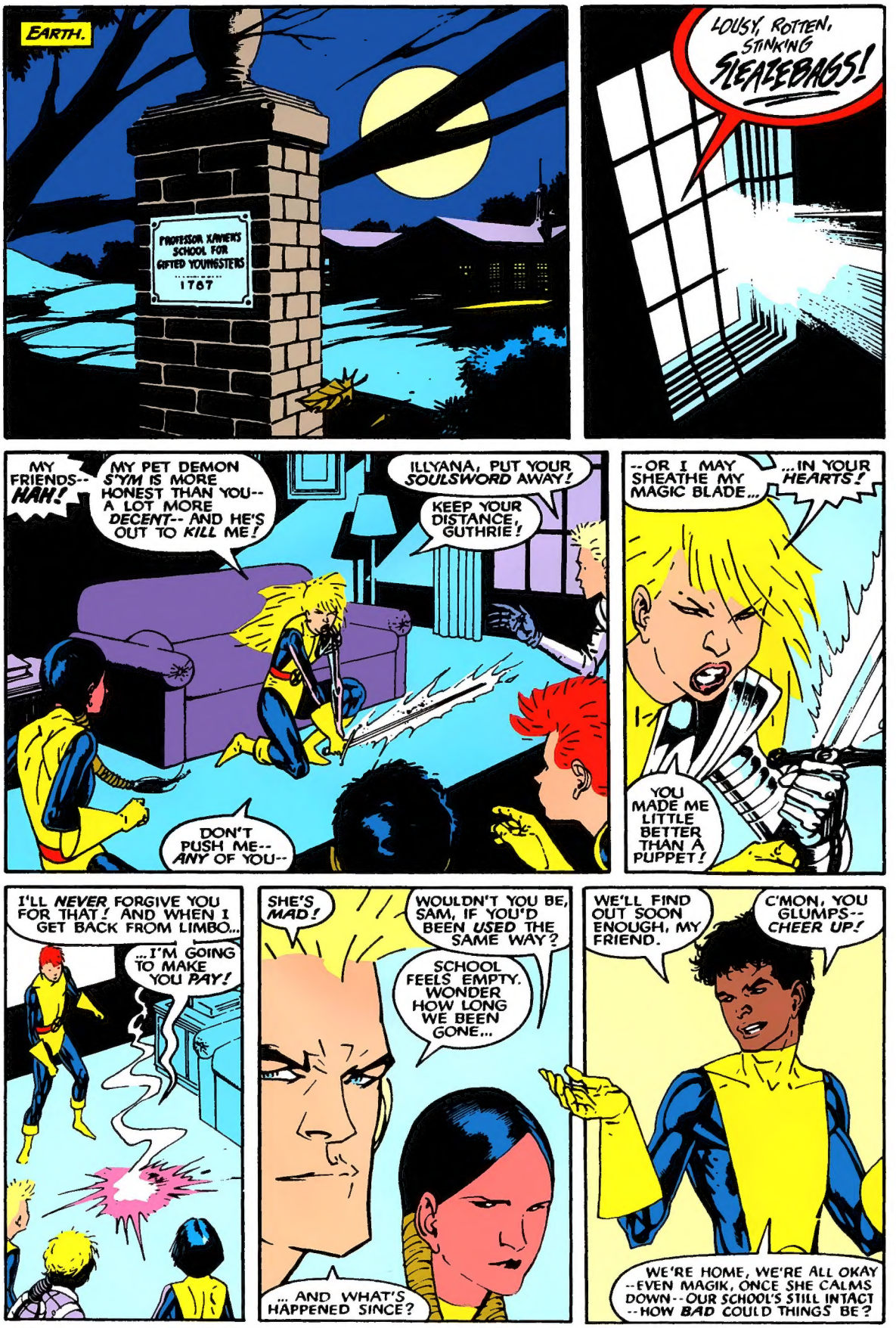

WE COULD DELAY YOUR RETURN UNTIL AFTER THE STARJAMMER IS OUT OF DANGER...
SUPPOSE WE DON'T ESCAPE?
THE NEW MUTANTS ARE CHILDREN, LILANDRA.
ABOVE ALL ELSE, THEIR LIVES MUST BE SAFEGUARDED.

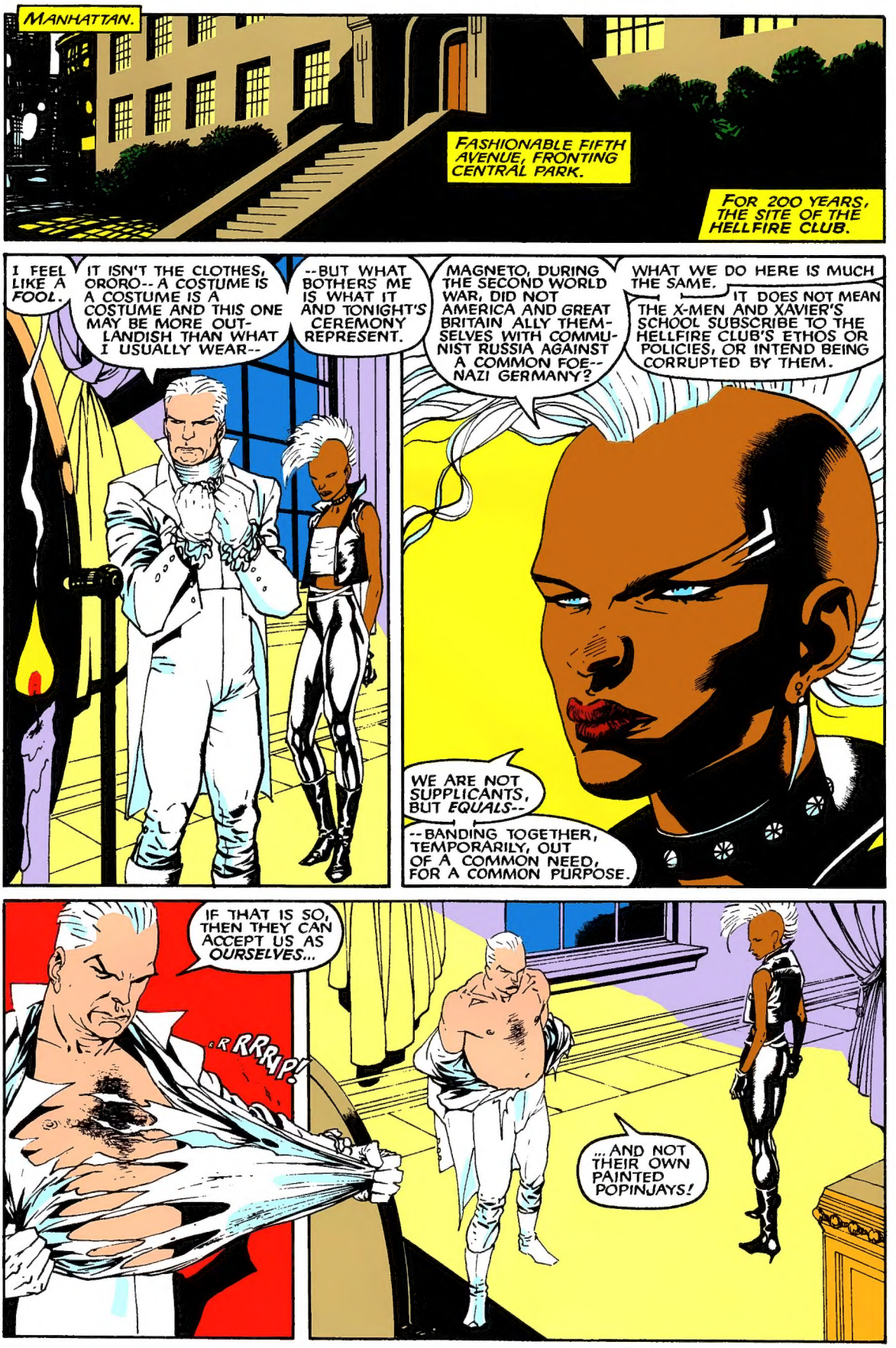

AND WHAT OF THE CHILDREN OF THIS GALAXY? YOU SAW THE THOUGHTS OF OUR HUNTERS. HOW MANY MORE WILL SUFFER-- HOW MANY WILL THEY SLAY-- IF MY SISTER IS ALLOWED FREE FLIGHT?!
WE STARJAMMERS ARE THE ONLY CHECK ON HER MAD AMBITION --DREAMS OF CONQUEST, CHARLES, WHICH WILL INEVITABLY ENGULF YOUR OWN WORLD.
WHICHEVER PATH I CHOOSE, THEN...

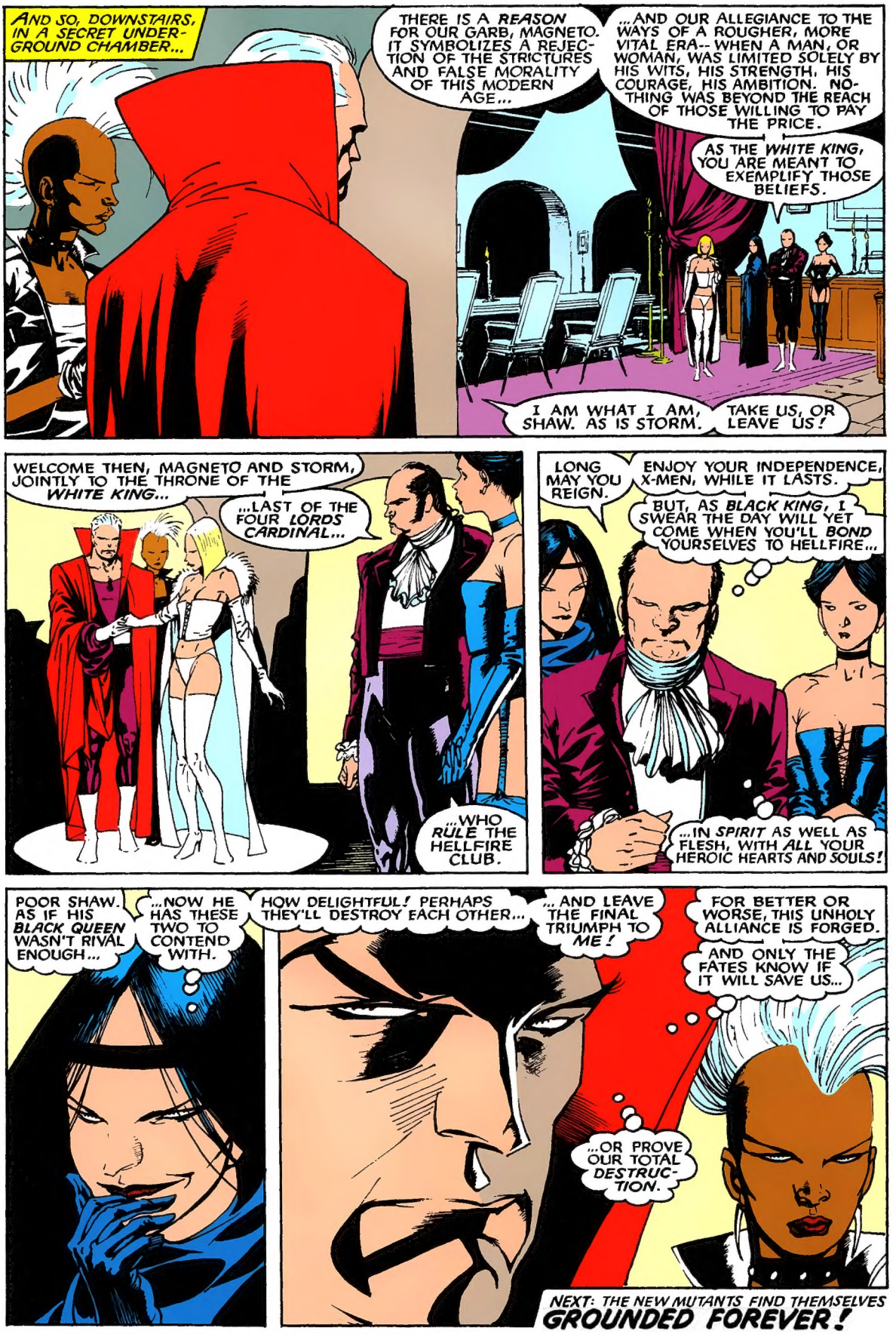
...I LOSE.


THE CARGO BAY...
STUDENTS ALL PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR, CHARLES.
SO-- YOU GOING WITH THEM, OR WHAT?
WHICH NEED IS PARAMOUNT?!
MY HEART PULLS ONE WAY, MY CONSCIENCE THE OTHER.
THE NEW MUTANTS SEEM TO BE IN GOOD HANDS WITH MAGNETO. I'VE TRUSTED HIM THIS FAR, WHY NOT LONGER?
AND YET-- IS EVEN HE EQUAL TO THESE THREATS?!
HEPZIBAH-- IMMEDIATE-- OBLIQUE BREAK RIGHT!
THE VESSEL IS STILL SOUND, BUT SHE'S BEING PUSHED WELL PAST HER LIMITS.
SHE-- AND THOSE ABOARD-- CANNOT ENDURE MUCH MORE.
I MUST DECIDE-- NOW!
I AM STAYING.
WE UNDER-STAND, SIR.
DO YOU, SAM? I TRULY HOPE SO.
I HOPE ILLYANA WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN FOR ME, AT SOME LATER DATE.
IN THE MEANWHILE, HER POWER WILL TELEPORT YOU HOME.
NO! I WON'T!
I WON'T GO BACK TO LIMBO-- I CAN'T, PROFESSOR, NOT WITHOUT YOU TO GIVE ME STRENGTH--
--PLEASE, oh PLEASE, DON'T MAKE ME!


I HAVEN'T THE TIME OR INCLINATION TO ARGUE THE MATTER, YOUNG LADY.
I KNOW THIS WILL BE HARD FOR YOU.
BUT IT IS ALSO NECESSARY.
AND YOU, KARMA...
... WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS *DONE*.
OUI, M'SIEU-- AS YOU COMMAND.
I HAVE *POSSESSED* ILLYANA.
FAREWELL, CHILDREN!
YOU TOO, PROF!
HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES YOU, SIR...
GET HOME SAFE!
...WE'LL BE WAITIN'!
THANK YOU, SAM.
YOU'VE NO IDEA...
...HOW MUCH THAT MEANS TO ME.
OKAY, CHUM, YOU'VE SAVED YOUR KIDS--
-- NOW DO THE SAME FOR *US*!


EARTH.
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS
1787
LOUSY, ROTTEN, STINKING SLEAZEBAGS!
MY FRIENDS-- HAH!
MY PET DEMON S'YM IS MORE HONEST THAN YOU-- A LOT MORE DECENT-- AND HE'S OUT TO KILL ME!
ILLYANA, PUT YOUR SOULSWORD AWAY!
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, GUTHRIE!
DON'T PUSH ME-- ANY OF YOU--
--OR I MAY SHEATHE MY MAGIC BLADE...
...IN YOUR HEARTS!
YOU MADE ME LITTLE BETTER THAN A PUPPET!
I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU FOR THAT! AND WHEN I GET BACK FROM LIMBO...
...I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY!
SHE'S MAD!
WOULDN'T YOU BE, SAM, IF YOU'D BEEN USED THE SAME WAY?
SCHOOL FEELS EMPTY. WONDER HOW LONG WE BEEN GONE...
... AND WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE?
WE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH, MY FRIEND.
C'MON, YOU GLUMPS-- CHEER UP!
WE'RE HOME, WE'RE ALL OKAY --EVEN MAGIK, ONCE SHE CALMS DOWN--OUR SCHOOL'S STILL INTACT --HOW BAD COULD THINGS BE?


MANHATTAN.
FASHIONABLE FIFTH AVENUE, FRONTING CENTRAL PARK.
FOR 200 YEARS, THE SITE OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB.
I FEEL LIKE A FOOL.
IT ISN'T THE CLOTHES, ORORO-- A COSTUME IS A COSTUME AND THIS ONE MAY BE MORE OUTLANDISH THAN WHAT I USUALLY WEAR--
--BUT WHAT BOTHERS ME IS WHAT IT AND TONIGHT'S CEREMONY REPRESENT.
MAGNETO, DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, DID NOT AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN ALLY THEMSELVES WITH COMMUNIST RUSSIA AGAINST A COMMON FOE-- NAZI GERMANY?
WHAT WE DO HERE IS MUCH THE SAME.
IT DOES NOT MEAN THE X-MEN AND XAVIER'S SCHOOL SUBSCRIBE TO THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S ETHOS OR POLICIES, OR INTEND BEING CORRUPTED BY THEM.
WE ARE NOT SUPPLICANTS, BUT EQUALS--
--BANDING TOGETHER, TEMPORARILY, OUT OF A COMMON NEED, FOR A COMMON PURPOSE.
IF THAT IS SO, THEN THEY CAN ACCEPT US AS OURSELVES...
RRRRIP!
...AND NOT THEIR OWN PAINTED POPINJAYS!


AND SO, DOWNSTAIRS, IN A SECRET UNDERGROUND CHAMBER...
THERE IS A REASON FOR OUR GARB, MAGNETO. IT SYMBOLIZES A REJECTION OF THE STRICTURES AND FALSE MORALITY OF THIS MODERN AGE...
...AND OUR ALLEGIANCE TO THE WAYS OF A ROUGHER, MORE VITAL ERA-- WHEN A MAN, OR WOMAN, WAS LIMITED SOLELY BY HIS WITS, HIS STRENGTH, HIS COURAGE, HIS AMBITION. NOTHING WAS BEYOND THE REACH OF THOSE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE.
AS THE WHITE KING, YOU ARE MEANT TO EXEMPLIFY THOSE BELIEFS.
I AM WHAT I AM, SHAW. AS IS STORM.
TAKE US, OR LEAVE US!
WELCOME THEN, MAGNETO AND STORM, JOINTLY TO THE THRONE OF THE WHITE KING...
...LAST OF THE FOUR LORDS CARDINAL...
...WHO RULE THE HELLFIRE CLUB.
LONG MAY YOU REIGN.
ENJOY YOUR INDEPENDENCE, X-MEN, WHILE IT LASTS.
BUT, AS BLACK KING, I SWEAR THE DAY WILL YET COME WHEN YOU'LL BOND YOURSELVES TO HELLFIRE...
...IN SPIRIT AS WELL AS FLESH, WITH ALL YOUR HEROIC HEARTS AND SOULS!
POOR SHAW. AS IF HIS BLACK QUEEN WASN'T RIVAL ENOUGH...
...NOW HE HAS THESE TWO TO CONTEND WITH.
HOW DELIGHTFUL! PERHAPS THEY'LL DESTROY EACH OTHER...
...AND LEAVE THE FINAL TRIUMPH TO ME!
FOR BETTER OR WORSE, THIS UNHOLY ALLIANCE IS FORGED.
AND ONLY THE FATES KNOW IF IT WILL SAVE US...
...OR PROVE OUR TOTAL DESTRUCTION.
NEXT: THE NEW MUTANTS FIND THEMSELVES GROUNDED FOREVER!

MINUTEMEN
Quick
STOP
RST